

**Town of Littleton Budget Committee Meeting
November 30, 2023 - Littleton Community Center
Draft Meeting Minutes**

Littleton Budget Committee: Art Bisenti, Diane Cummings, John Goodrich, Steve Kelley, Mary Menzies, John Piette, Dan Stearns

Town Officials: Lori Bolasevich (Finance Director), Roger Emerson (SB), Carrie Gendreau (SB), Jim Gleason (Town Manager), Linda MacNeil (SB), Paul Smith (Chief of Police), James Gardiner (Deputy Chief of Police), Rilee Clark (Interim Opera House Manager), Peter Cooper (Littleton Area Chamber of Commerce)

Public: Rudy Gelsi

Committee Chair Diane Cummings called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm.

- Minutes of the 11/09/23 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve (DS); seconded (JG); passed 7/0.
- Minutes of the 11/16/23 meeting were reviewed. Dan Stearns wanted to add wording to note that the Budget Committee had criticized the purchase of a new tractor by Parks and Recreation in last year's budget review and the same warrant article was being proposed again this year. Dan offered to send Mary suggested wording to add to the minutes. With this anticipated amendment, there was a motion to approve (DS); seconded (AB); passed 7/0.

The **Police Department** operating budget and Warrant Articles 17-20 were reviewed. Chief Smith and Deputy Chief Gardiner provided thorough explanations for the budget changes and warrant articles. It was noted that there has been a significant increase in State-mandated training requirements for police officers which impacts both overtime hours and training expenditures.

The **Opera House** budget and Warrant Article 36 were reviewed.

Peter Cooper from the **Littleton Chamber of Commerce** came to get the committee's recommendation on the Chamber's proposed petitioned Warrant Article 41 (Downtown Beautification). This article has been on the Town warrant for the past several years at a cost of about \$20,000 and includes some funding to replace flags and poles as well as holiday lighting fixtures. The bulk of the funding has gone to purchase and water hanging flower baskets for Main Street and other parts of town that have decorative light poles with hooks for baskets. Houghton's Greenhouses in Vermont has supplied the baskets in the past but will no longer be able to do so. When seeking bids from alternate suppliers, Peter found that the lowest bid was twice as much as Houghton's had previously charged. He brought forward two proposals:

- Purchase 76 flower baskets (same as last year) at a cost of \$14,060 (compared to \$7,220 in 2023)
- Reduce the scope from 76 to 46 baskets and cover only Main Street at a cost of \$8,510

Discussion ensued in support of keeping the scope the same as this year and purchasing the full 76 baskets.

Dan Stearns moved to recommend the Warrant Article at the full amount of \$27,117; seconded (SB); passed 5/2/0.

Parking Lot Items:

- Discussion at the 10/19/23 meeting of petitioned warrant articles and whether to ask for presentations from the organizations and to vote on each or to abstain. The budget committee is required to vote on any warrant article with a tax impact. This still needs to be decided.

Upcoming Meetings:

The 12/07/23 meeting will be at the Fire House to review the Fire Department budget.

The 12/14/23 meeting will be at the Community Center.

Motion to adjourn (DS); second (SK); passed 7/0

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Menzies

Recording Secretary